

Remarks by The Honorable Sean O'Keefe
NASA Administrator
School Video

Hello, I'm Sean O'Keefe the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration....better known as NASA.

Thank you for inviting me into your school today to speak about NASA's exciting exploration and discovery work in the air and outer space.

My job is to lead a wonderful team of scientists, engineers, astronauts and other professionals who are helping to pioneer the future every day.

NASA's work takes us to some really amazing places. At this very moment, 250 miles over our heads space explorers are circling our entire planet every 90 minutes onboard the International Space Station, a research facility the size of an entire football field.

Our astronaut and cosmonaut crews on the International Space Station are conducting several experiments aimed at helping better the quality of life for all of us. They are also learning to live in zero-gravity or weightlessness; in space, you just float around and you have no sense of up or down. I'm told it's a great place to practice summersaults without worrying about falling down.

Now while many of you have seen NASA send astronauts up to the International Space Station on the Space Shuttle from our launch site in Florida, we also send to the planets robotic spacecraft like our Mars Exploration Rovers Spirit and Opportunity.

Over the years, NASA spacecraft have photographed and examined Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus and Neptune, with only distant Pluto waiting to be explored, perhaps by a spacecraft that one of you will help control.

On a regular basis we also rocket satellites into space that help us better understand the Earth's weather and climate and telescopes that help us discover far away planets and unlock many of the universe's secrets. Other NASA people work to make safer airplanes for all of us.

In the future we may build even larger structures and telescopes in space and send astronauts to live and work on Mars and other places in our solar system. Who knows, maybe one of you will be a part of that astronaut crew.

If you want to be involved in exciting work like this, or to be successful in whatever you choose to do, I urge you to study hard in school, especially math and science subjects, set big goals and be persistent in the pursuit of your goals.

With the assistance and guidance of your families and teachers, I'm confident that you will be well prepared for the amazing second century of exploration and discovery that is ahead.

I know that many of you would like to learn more about NASA—about our missions and the talented people who make them happen.

A good way to find out more about NASA is to go to our web site, www.nasa.gov. My own kids, who are a bit older than you, love to search our web site for the latest news about outer space.